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Bill in House would prevent expanded use of polygraph

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Chairman Jack Brooks of the House Government Operations Committee introduced a bill yesterday to block the administration's plans to expand its use of polygraph tests in investigating misuse of national security information.

The bill also would prevent implementation of a proposal to require government employees and civilians with access to highly classified information to get pre-clearance of all writing and speeches about such material.

The Texas Democrat said the proposals, both contained in a directive Pres-

ident Reagan issued last March, would "place a premium on intimidation" of government workers or employees of government contractors.

Congress has delayed the effective date until March 15 to gain time to consider legislation that would cancel the directive or modify its terms. Mr. Brooks chose to try to void the directive outright.

Mr. Brooks said his bill would not affect the present practices of the CIA and of the National Security Council, which are understood to use the polygraph and pre-clearance controls currently.

The presidential directive calls for using the polygraph only for investiga-

tions of illegal activity but, for the first time, would subject a government employee to sanctions if he refuses, the committee said.

Mr. Brooks said his bill would allow use of the polygraph only for such investigation and only on a voluntary basis.

A committee report issued last November said the directive's provision for lie detector tests could involve as many as 2.5 million persons, while an estimated 127,000 would be subjected to lifetime pre-clearance of their writings or speeches.

The polygraph, or lie detector, has not been proven accurate and its use could cause a miscarriage of justice, the report said. It said the pre-clearance requirement is an unwarranted prior restraint on free speech.

For the first time, the committee said, an employee could be penalized for refusing a polygraph test.

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